

# MISTFALL

## QUEST GUIDE

Welcome to the Quest Guide. This booklet outlines the setup and any special rules of different quests used in **Mistfall**.



### For Your First Game

It is strongly recommended that you play the **Into the Wilds** Quest for your first game. It does not use all of the game elements and is significantly shorter than any other quests.

### Lower Difficulty Levels

If you find the game too difficult, you may make it easier introducing one or both of the following rules modifications:

#### 1. More time

Start the game with the marker cube on Time Track  moved a few positions to the left. It is recommended to move it a number of spaces equal to double the number of players (2  ) from its starting position.


#### 2. More cards

After drawing your starting hands, each player draws 2 extra cards from their deck and adds them to their hand.




### Higher Difficulty Levels

If you find the game too easy, you may make it more challenging by introducing one or more of the following rules modifications:

#### 1. Nightmare Hero Charters

Set up **all** Hero Charters on the Nightmare side (the side featuring the Special Enemy symbol ).

#### 2. Nightmare Quest Charter

Set up the Quest Charter on the Nightmare side (the side featuring the Special Enemy symbol ). Please note that the Time Track  and the Reinforcement Track  are modified to provide a greater challenge for the players.

#### 3. Nightmare Time Cards

If you own the Kickstarter Limited Stretch Goal cards, you may switch out the regular Time Deck with the one provided with the Stretch Goal Cards. All the Stretch Goal Time Cards can be recognized by the roman number II following their name.

### Caution!



If you decide to introduce all of the above rules modifications, some Quests might turn out to be almost impossible to win!

## QUEST I: INTO THE WILDS

*While investigating strange happenings of the last few days, you leave the Frostvalley Keep and make for **Hearthfire Inn** – a final outpost in the wild north. Among the scouts and the few people who still live here word has it that a mad beastman shaman has been gathering a warband and is ready to strike at a neighbouring fortified village within a few days. You need to stop him before it is too late.*



### Quest Special Setup

This Quest is played using only one Enemy deck and a smaller set of Encounters. While following the normal setup found in the rulebook, remove the Blue and Red Enemy decks from the game. Also, the only Encounters used are those with the *Wildlands* keyword: remove all others (including the ones where the *Wildlands* keyword is accompanied by another keyword) from the game. Move the marker cube on the Time Track 6 positions to the right ( 6 ) without resolving any track effects.

### Reward Setup

Choose 1 Hero specific Reward card for each Hero and place it face down in the middle of the table. Add 8 random Transient Reward Gear cards and shuffle the newly formed Reward deck together. Any other Reward cards are removed from the game.

### Location Setup

Remove all Locations without the *Wildlands* or *Haven* keyword from the game. Shuffle 3 *Wildlands* Locations face down and place them face down in a line. Place the **Hearthfire Inn** (the Haven Location) face up at the leftmost end of the line. Place the Party Token on that Location.

### Special Encounter and Enemy Setup




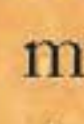
Place the **Into the Wilds** Special Encounter on the rightmost Location tile. Place the **Ghardhak the Charred** Special Enemy card next to the Location. Players may reference these cards at any time, but they are not considered to be in play until **Into the Wilds** becomes the Active Encounter.





## Special Encounter and Enemy Rules

### 1. Ghardhak the Charred Bodyguards special ability

No player may target this Enemy by any card that directly deals physical  or magical  damage, or places a Condition token on an Enemy. **Ghardhak** may be targeted by cards that will exploit his Vulnerability (*Divine* cards), as long as the resolved effect does not deal physical  or magical  damage directly. This rule is ignored when **Ghardhak** is in an Area without any other Enemies.

### 2. Ghardhak the Charred Enrage ability

When Enraged, **Ghardhak** deals damage to all Heroes regardless of which Area he is in, as long as he gets to attack normally during the Defence Phase.

## Special Enemy Life

2  +6

## Quest Victory

This Quest ends in Hero victory, when the **Into the Wilds** Encounter is successfully ended. No special rules apply.

## QUEST II: THE ABOMINATION

*A group of scouts has recently returned to Frostvalley Keep bearing ill tidings: one of the reinforced villages in the further north has been completely wiped out by an attack like of which they had not seen in a long time. The only survivor of the massacre was driven to the edge of madness, but from his words you managed to piece together an almost coherent story. The village was attacked by undead led by an abominable creature of the Mists, who the survivor referred to as Maelgar: a mad warrior who was reputedly killed in an ambush some time ago.*



*The Frostvalley Keep Loremasters were able to shed more light on the story: apparently, Maelgar was transformed after being taken by the Mists. However, as he used to be a brigand leader, there are still his treasure hoards left, and some of them might hold vital information or artefacts that can be used against the beast. The scouts said that they managed to track Maelgar to a desecrated temple, where the Mists are sending more undead to follow him into other raging battles. You have to leave immediately to end the forsaken beast's existence once and for all.*

## Reward Setup

Choose 1 Hero specific Reward card for each Hero and place it face down in the middle of the table. Add 8 random Transient Reward Gear cards and shuffle the newly formed Reward deck together. Any other Reward cards are removed from the game.

## Location Setup

Place the **Hearthfire Inn** and the **Desecrated Temple** Locations to the side and shuffle all other Locations together. Form a 3 by 3 grid, placing the **Desecrated Temple** Location face down in the top left corner (1) and the **Hearthfire Inn** face up in the bottom right corner (2) of the grid. The other Locations start the game face down.

1	3	
4		5
	6	2

## Quest Token Setup

Use the A, B, C and D Quest tokens. Shuffle them face down and place 1 randomly on Locations (3), (4), (5) and (6).




## Special Encounter and Enemy Setup

Place **The Abomination** Special Encounter on the (1) Location tile. Place the **Maelgar the Abomination** Special Enemy card next to the Location. Players may reference these cards at any time, but they are not considered to be in play until **The Abomination** becomes the Active Encounter.



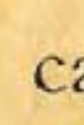
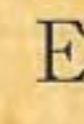
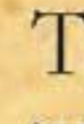


## Quest Token Rules

When a Location with a Quest Token is revealed (turned face up when it becomes Active Location or when it is scouted), reveal any Quest Tokens on that Location as well. Whenever a Location with a Quest Token becomes Safe that token is placed in the Quest Area [Q]. When **Maelgar the Abomination** or **Raging Abomination** is in play, any of the Quest Tokens in the Quest Area [Q] may be used (as a [3] Reflex) to:


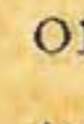
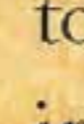
- **A, B** – Place 2  on **Maelgar the Abomination** or the **Raging Abomination** Special Enemy card.
- **C** – Move the Reinforcements Track  to 0 (leftmost position on the track).
- **D** – Move **Maelgar the Abomination** or the **Raging Abomination** Special Enemy card to any Hero Area  and ignore the **Beastly Rage** ability until the end of the round.

## Special Encounter and Enemy Rules

### 1. Maelgar the Abomination/Raging Abomination Beastly Rage special ability

After all normal Enemy attacks (including **Maelgar's/Raging Abomination's** normal attack), the **Maelgar/Raging Abomination** card is immediately moved to the Hero Area  of the Hero with highest Enemy Focus  value (marker cube furthest right on the Enemy Focus Track ). Enemy Focus  of that Hero is reduced normally ( $\leftarrow \frac{1}{2}$  ). Then, **Maelgar/Raging Abomination** attacks that Hero. After resolving this ability, resolve Conditions normally.

### 2. Margath the Abomination Die Hard special ability

When the number of Wound  tokens on **Maelgar** becomes equal to or exceeds his Life value, remove all of the Wound  and Condition tokens from his card and flip the card to the **Raging Abomination** side immediately. The **Raging Abomination** enters play with no Wound  or Condition tokens, regardless of any that were placed on **Maelgar**.

## Special Enemy Life

2  +5



## Quest Victory

This Quest ends in Hero victory, when **The Abomination** Encounter is successfully ended. No special rules apply.

## QUEST III: TANGLED PATHS

*It has been some time since you've heard of one once known simply as Rahlfors, a Loremaster from Frostvalley Keep. The former friend and ally of the Shieldbearers, after striking a devastating blow to the alliance of Frostvalley and Ravencrag, managed to escape into the Mists. Now, it seems, he is putting a new plan into motion.*



*Scouts returning from the north are reporting strange occurrences of landmarks slightly changing their position, and among the guests of **Hearthfire Inn** tales of paths and trails becoming almost alive are all that is talked about. The Frostvalley Loremasters managed to tie the phenomenon to Rahlfors, and by all accounts the situation might become truly dire within days. A short vision granted by the Dawnmother shows that the Waychanger resides at a burned village in the north, but finding the right path that leads to him will not be an easy task, and only finding the rifts that are the source of corrupting energies will stabilize the land enough to reach Rahlfors' location.*

## Reward Setup

Choose 1 Hero specific Reward card for each Hero and place it face down in the middle of the table. Add 8 random Transient Reward Gear cards and shuffle the newly formed Reward deck together. Any other Reward cards are removed from the game.

## Location Setup

Place the **Hearthfire Inn** and the **Burned Village** Locations to the side and shuffle all other Locations together. Form a 3 by 3 grid, placing the **Burned Village** Location face down in the top left corner (1) and the **Hearthfire Inn** face up in the bottom right corner (2) of the grid. Before setting up the other Locations, remove 3 random *Borderlands* Location, 4 random *Deadlands* Locations and 4 random *Wildlands* Locations.

1		
		2

## Quest Token Setup

Shuffle all tokens face down and place them in a pile in the Quest Area (Q).

## Special Encounter and Enemy Setup



Place the **Tangled Paths** Special Encounter on the (1) Location tile. Place the **Rahlfors the Waychanger** Special Enemy card next to the Location. Players may reference



these cards at any time, but they are not considered to be in play until the **Tangled Paths** becomes the Active Encounter.

## Quest Token Rules

Whenever a round ends and there is no Active Encounter in play, draw 1 random Quest Token to determine how the Location grid will be modified. Each Quest Token determines a row or column that needs to be slid. When sliding a row or a column, move all Locations in it by one position, and relocate the Location tile that is moved out of the Location grid to the position that has just been emptied. When moving any Location tiles, all tokens (including the Party Token) are moved together with the tile.

Depending on the Quest Token drawn, slide the Location tiles accordingly:

- **A** – Move the leftmost column down. The bottom left corner Location tile is moved to the top left corner position.
- **B** – Move the middle column up. The bottom centre Location tile is moved to the top centre position.
- **C** – Move the rightmost column down. The bottom right corner Location tile is moved to the top right corner position.
- **D** – Move the top row right. The top left corner Location tile is moved to the top right corner position.
- **E** – Move the centre row left. The centre left Location tile is moved to the centre right position.
- **F** – Move the bottom row right. The bottom right corner Location tile is moved to the bottom left corner position.

## Special Encounter and Enemy Rules

### 1. Rahlfors the Waychanger Entropy Strike special ability

Whenever a player Buries any number of cards as a direct result of this Enemy's attack (the player failed to cancel some or all damage dealt by **Rahlfors**), that player must choose one *Gear* card in their Hero Area (H) and discard it immediately. If the player has no *Gear* cards in their Hero Area (H), this special ability has no effect.

### 2. Rahlfors the Waychanger Flight special ability

Whenever a player wants to target **Rahlfors** with any effect, **Rahlfors** can only be targeted with a (2) or more range effect when in that player's Hero Area (H), a (3) or more range effect when in the Quest Area (Q) or another player's Hero Area (H).

### 3. Flipping Rahlfors the Waychanger card

Whenever any number of Wound tokens (D) are placed on **Rahlfors**, flip his card. Do not remove any Wounds (D) or Conditions.

### 4. Cancelling Special Abilities

Whenever a player decides to remove 2 Objective Tokens (O) from the **Tangled Paths** Special Encounter cards, that player may cancel one Special Ability printed on the **Rahlfors the Waychanger** card. The ability is cancelled for the duration of one effect targeting **Rahlfors**.

## Special Enemy Life

2 (D) +6

## Quest Victory

This Quest ends in Hero victory, when the **Tangled Paths** Encounter is successfully ended. No special rules apply.



# QUEST IV: CONSUMING FLAMES

You are woken up in the middle of the night by a messenger reaching the inn you've been resting after your last venture into the frozen lands. The man's tattered clothes and ash-smearred face already tells you a part of the story, even before he opens his mouth. Nonetheless, the messenger proceeds to speak about balls of flame erupting in the middle of his village and the carnage that followed. As he speaks of the one that leads the attackers, you recognize Sigraed, a mad flamecaster known for slaughtering dozens of people in Dathnafar. She is on the move, leading a band of renegade mages and some brigands who share in her madness.



As you emerge from the inn you already see the light in the sky. Valskyrr is burning, and if you want to stop the sorcerous flames from spreading, you will need to act fast.

## Reward Setup

Choose 1 Hero specific Reward card for each Hero and place it face down in the middle of the table. Add 8 random Transient Reward Gear cards and shuffle the newly formed Reward deck together. Any other Reward cards are removed from the game.

## Location Setup

Place the **Hearthfire Inn** and the **Burned Village** Locations to the side and shuffle all other *Borderlands* Locations together. Form a 2 by 4 grid, placing the **Burned Village** Location face down in the top left corner (1) and the **Hearthfire Inn** face up in the bottom right corner (2) of the grid.

1			
			2

## Quest Token Setup

Shuffle all tokens face down and place 1 Quest Token on each of the face down Locations, excluding the Burned Village.

## Special Encounter and Enemy Setup



Place the **Consuming Flames** Special Encounter on the (1) Location tile. Place the **Sigraed, Lady of Mistflame** Special Enemy card with the *Channeling* side up next to the Location. Players may reference these cards at any time, but they are not considered to be in play until the **Consuming Flames** becomes the Active Encounter.

## Quest Token Rules

If the Active Location is Safe, and it is either a *Borderlands* or a *Deadlands* Location, at the start of the Hero Phase players may draw 1 random Quest Token (only 1 token is drawn regardless of the number of Heroes).

- **A, B** – Place 1 Burning Condition token on each Hero Charter.
- **C, D** – Each player discards 1 card or places 2 Burning Condition

tokens on their Hero Charter.

- **E, F** - Each player discards 1 Resolve token from the pool or places 2 Burning Condition tokens on their Hero Charter. If there are too few Resolve tokens in the pool for a player to discard 2, that player may not avoid placing the Burning Condition tokens on their Hero Charter.

## Special Encounter and Enemy Rules

### 1. Special Encounter becomes Active

After **Consuming Flames** becomes the Active Encounter, remove all Quest Tokens still remaining on Locations. **Sigraed** receives extra Life equal to double the number of players for each of those tokens.

### 2. Sigraed, Lady of Mistflame Immolate special ability

Whenever a player Buries any number of cards as a direct result of this Enemy's attack (the player failed to cancel some or all damage dealt by **Sigraed**), 1 Burning Condition token is placed on each Hero Charter. Whenever this ability is successfully used, flip the **Sigraed** card.

### 3. Sigraed, Lady of Mistflame Fireblast special ability

At the start of the Defence Phase each Hero is dealt a number of magical damage equal to the number of Burning Condition tokens on their Hero Charter. The tokens are not removed. Whenever this ability is successfully used, flip the **Sigraed** card.

### 4. Flipping the Sigraed, Lady of Mistflame card

Whenever **Sigraed** successfully used one of her abilities, flip her card. Do not remove any Wounds or Conditions.

## Special Enemy Life

- **2 +6.** Add extra Life for Quest Tokens remaining on Locations after setting up the **Consuming Flames** Special Encounter.

## Quest Victory

This Quest ends in Hero victory, when the **Consuming Flames** Encounter is successfully ended. No special rules apply.



# THE STORY OF MISTFALL

## Cosmology of the Northern Realms

*The oldest tales of the Northern Realms speak of a featureless, barren globe suspended in nothingness, and of two Prime Powers that descended from the void to shape the world and bestow upon it the gift of life. Some say that the divine beings had been separate and different from each other since the beginning of time. According to others, it was when the sun had risen and then set over the world for the first time that the two gods were separated for the first time: one embracing the Light and becoming Dawn, the Mother of Day, and the other forever merging with the Darkness to become Dusk, the Nightfather.*

*Despite their differences, they laboured dauntlessly, always on two opposite ends of the globe, enveloping it in clear skies, sculpting mountains and valleys, separating the lands from the seas and filling rivers and lakes with water. They would also create life, Dawn crafting plants and all the creatures that would feed on them, and Dusk shaping beasts of prey and all things happy to live under a night sky. Finally, having built a glorious home for their offspring, they went about creating their masterpiece: the Firstborn.*

*The work was divided evenly: while Dusk crafted his children's bodies by night, Dawn would create their minds and souls by day. It was also during the day that she breathed life into them, and as they looked upon the world for the first time, they fell in love with their mother, who they would forever follow, developing an immediate distrust of darkness. And even though Dusk would gift them with all his love, they would still shun him.*

*The Nightfather was heartbroken. Despite his best efforts, his offspring would remain fearful or indifferent, not recognizing him as their creator and protector. Finally, disappointed and scorned, Dusk lashed at the ground in a fit of dark rage, burning his creations with a wrathful black fire, covering the lands in ash and burying the broken bodies of his children under rock and stone.*

*Silence fell over the world once again, and in the distance Dusk could hear the mournful cries of Dawn, as even she was not able to give life back to her murdered children. Remembering the pain of his own loss, the Nightfather harvested the mercy and hope still lingering in the cold Darkness, until he could give it shape and forge it into a Moon. And as the Moon eclipsed the sun, the Mother of Day and the Father of Night were united one last time, to work together on recreating their greatest achievement.*

*And so they crafted mankind, gifting it with both their essences in equal measure. Instilling human minds with Light and Darkness made the gods' children truly free, for now they had the capacity to love both day and night, and the ability to choose between the two paths that started from the same place, but ultimately led into two opposite directions.*

*Since that last union, the Moon has stood as a solemn reminder of Dusk's last act of grace, and some say that it reflects the light of the sun because the Nightfather used up all of his compassion to forge its celestial body, and all of his love for the Mother of Day to make it yield to his will and eclipse the Sun – and that when it all happens again, it will be at the end of days.*

## The Awakening and the First Age

*From the day of the Awakening, humanity started spreading and conquering the furthest corners of its new home. And as men grew in the Light, the Mother of Day watched her children with pride. But Dusk*

*would look upon them with a growing disdain, for in those times only few would choose the shadows over the light of day. And those who did were either too weak to make their father proud, or so headstrong, that they would try to harness his power and use it to their own ends.*

*Bitter and irate, Dusk turned his thoughts to crafting a new race – one that would serve him without question. In the deepest darkness of the old forests, in the forgotten caves under the tallest mountains, he engineered his servants, building their bodies to resemble both humans and the beasts of prey he had made in the beginning. Without Dawn's aid, he crafted their minds with his own essence, instilling in them a primal rage and a desire to feed and to conquer. Satisfied, the Nightfather watched his new offspring multiply and grow in strength, with minds focused on an endless hunt. And when their numbers grew, he unleashed them upon humanity. From now on, in the forests and on the edges of civilization men would become prey as often, as they would be hunters, for it was the Nightfather's desire to prove that his creation was better than that of him and Dawn.*

*A struggle between humanity and the beastmen would continue for countless centuries. Where children of Dusk came to rule, chaos would ensue. With minds set on the hunt, without common enemies, the wild beastmen would fight among themselves, forming tribes to war each other, spilling blood over hunting grounds – and falling deeper and deeper into an internal strife that would in time leave them open to retaliation. Displeased yet again, the Nightfather tried to punish those of his offspring who were first to turn against their own kind, but quickly found out that whatever ill fortune he would condemn them to, it would only make their fury burn ever hotter and more savage.*

*Finally, Dusk came to realise the weakness of his creation. While men, made when Dawn and Dusk had laboured together, would be free to become destroyers or builders, the beastmen were condemned to the one purpose the Nightfather had forged them for – and it seemed that all they would ever want was the power to hunt and kill, and war each other in an endless conflict.*

## The coming of the Mists

*Growing more and more tired, with his grip on the beastmen slipping, Dusk devised a simple but cruel punishment. The Nightfather turned his gaze away from his children, and all the magic they had called upon to strengthen them would disappear. Suddenly deprived of their might, the shamans and chieftains of the tribes called out to their father, but he would not answer, watching in bitter satisfaction as servants of Dawn started once again claiming the wilderness that had belonged to the beastmen.*

*But the beastmen, unable to comprehend the change of their fate, would still call out, craving for their lost strength. Drums beat day and night, as the abandoned tribes performed dark rituals, trying to win back the grace of Dusk by feats of strength and bloody sacrifice. Determined to regain what they had lost, they would call out dauntlessly, until something answered.*

*From the far north, from a land where night and day are almost like one, the Mists reached out to the abandoned children of Dusk, first touching the Ghoren – the mightiest and most numerous tribe – filling them once more with the power they had craved so much. But the touch of the Mists was far different from the gaze of the Nightfather, as it would twist and transform its new servants, and where it was thickest – even the land itself.*

*Filled with a new power, suddenly more malicious and bloodthirsty than ever before, the beastmen struck against humanity, with a cruelty and relentlessness that made the human kingdoms shudder. But as humans*



gathered up their strength and finally managed to stand their ground against their old enemy, the cold Mists struck at them with a new, even more terrifying threat. At first there were only tales of ghostly shapes walking the barrows and the dark woods. Tales of empty skulls and rotting flesh peeling off bones reanimated by a sinister power. Tales of the dead raised from the ashes, and of former brothers dragged out of their graves and twisted by the Mists, once again taking up arms, but this time to become humanity's demise.

Humanity's initial disbelief almost became its unmaking, as it took numerous villages and a few holds to fall before those who had not yet seen the undead to finally acknowledge their existence – and start preparing to counter the new threat. Thus, a new order of priests was formed, one that would wield the power of Dawn to specifically strike at what the goddess would find the most unnatural and hideous. Few in numbers, the Dawnbreakers would lead humanity against the living dead, initiating a time of desperate battles, epic deeds and great sacrifices.

And so came the Age of Heroes.

## The Valskyrr

Despite the Valskyrr being one of the most inhospitable of the Northern Realms, it was also one of the first to be conquered by humanity in the early days, long before the **Mistfall**. As if to prove their right to rule the world, the Children of Dawn built their homes in the rocky foothills, on mountain slopes and deep in the snow covered woods of the valleys.

The north-western part of the Valskyrr ends with a cold sea that freezes for the duration of a few of the coldest months of the year. That, however, did not stop the Valskyrrians' expansion, making them some of the first people to master the art of shipbuilding. It quickly led them to become explorers and traders, and sometimes, in the case of those few who would worship the ever scornful Dusk, also raiders, feared on every other coast of the known world.

After the Nightfather had created his own children, the Valskyrrians were first to come into contact with them. The beastmen tribes quickly found out, however, that although their numbers and their ferocity may make them natural predators and hunters, even in a hopeless situation the people of the Valskyrr would not go down without a fight – and without taking as many of their enemies with them.

The Valskyrr was also one of the regions first touched by the corrupting tendrils of the Mists, with its most northern parts influenced heavily enough to change the land itself. It was here that the Mistwalker term was coined, as the bravest and strongest of the Valskyrrians would venture into Mist-ridden territories in search for an answer to the mystery of the Mists. And although many have not returned, some say that one woman uncovered a terrible secret, now guarded deep within the dungeons of Frostvalley Keep.

Although the people of Valskyrr are truly indomitable, their territories have suffered greatly from invasions of beastmen and the ravaging undead, which scarred the land and left hundreds of burned villages and decrepit ruins of old outposts, now haunted by creatures returned from the dead or created by the Mists.

Now the Valskyrr is a house besieged, perilous and more hostile than ever before. But for as much the Mists push its people, so do they push back, never easily broken. It seems that their strength and resolve remains unwavering in the face of the nameless horrors spawned by the Mists and the brutality of its beastmen servants.

## The Denizens of the Valskyrr

Today most of the Valskyrrians live in or around Frostvalley Keep, a stronghold built between two mountain ranges almost four ages ago to stop any further expansion of the Mist-driven beastmen hordes. The rest of the people are spread all over the land, inhabiting small settlements that exist in constant danger of being taken by the Mists or invaded by its servants.

People of the Valskyrr are easily recognizable wherever they appear: tall, stout and broad shouldered, with strong arms as if made to wield smithing hammers, axes or broadswords and heavy thick shields. In the other Northern Realms the Valskyrrians are considered giants, for even Valskyrrian women often stand taller than men born in less harsh and unforgiving regions.

As for other denizens of the Valskyrr, the whole lands and especially its northern territories, are swarming with beastmen, and almost every old ruin seems to house some sort of a returned dead: from reanimated skeletons, to wraiths, night wailers and the formidable draugrs. The coldest parts of the Valskyrr are also a home to all manner of frost beasts: animals twisted by the Mists and fused with the ice that surrounds them.

## The Borderlands

What is now commonly known as the Borderlands used to be inhabited by the Valskyrrians up until the time the Mists took hold of beastmen, raised the dead and darkened the minds of some humans, either making them go mad, or drawing from their darkest instincts to reshape their minds and break their will.

The landscape of the Borderlands is filled with remnants of what used to exist here. Burned villages, abandoned shrines, keeps and watchtowers struck down by the fury of ancient battles, and then reclaimed by the wilds. Once filled with life and light, now these territories are ruled by bands of brigands and dark cults, and steeped in thick ice brought on by the dark magic and the cruel northern winds.

## Denizens of the Borderlands

The Borderlands used to be a part of the inhabited Valskyrr. The proud and strong people that took this land as their own in ages past would call these now abandoned places their home. Those who still live here, wilfully or unwittingly serve the Mists, allowing them to spread its influence ever further.

Most of the Borderlands were not lost because of vicious beastmen attacks – they more often fell to acts of betrayal and villainy of those, who saw the **Mistfall** as an opportunity to reach their own goals and were ready to kill or enslave others. As keeps and villages yielded to poisoned blades and sorcerous fire, many of the convicted criminals or power hungry madmen made their way to what they perceived as a land of new opportunities and a place where their skills could be used to satisfy their lust for wealth or power.

Travelling through those territories always carries the risk of encountering those who are more than eager to part travellers from their property, their freedom or their life. Terrifying news of captives taken away to become sacrifice in blasphemous rituals or bartered away to the beastmen, keep those who live at the edge of the Borderlands awake at night, with their weapons always at the ready.

## The Wildlands

The wilderness has never been welcoming, especially in the northern, ice-ridden lands of the Valskyrr, and many settlers and explorers would come to realize that venturing deeper into the north was a dangerous endeavour not only because of the creatures living there. Swept by cold



winds, unforgiving, sometimes surprisingly barren and featureless, the Wildlands would often repel – or kill – those only seeking passage.

The half man, half beast children of the Nightfather inhabiting those hostile territories also left their mark, as the Wildlands were transformed by the Mists, and those who enter them now may often suffer from the effects of the dark sorcery the beastmen shamans dabble with. But even without the dark magic, crossing icy plains and half-frozen rivers can prove an impossible task for those who are not well prepared.

### Denizens of the Wildlands

Venturing into the wilderness, humanity would always find the same enemies waiting there: beasts of prey ready to defend their hunting grounds – or make do with new game that decided to enter their domain on their own. And things got even more dangerous, when the Duskfather decided to elevate animal hunters and use them to create a race more similar to humans – but more ferocious and obsessed with the idea of the hunt.

Natural hunters and warriors, beastmen usually employ a simple strategy: striking fast and hard. Their natural resilience and toughness makes them difficult to repel. Now mostly united under the Ghoren war totems, the majority of beastmen serve the Mists by roaming the lands and still trying to find new prey. Whenever able to tap into the potential of the Mist-enhanced ferocity, the Ghoren beastmen become more than a match for Heroes seeking passage through their lands. The beasts display similar features, and although less resilient, they may make up for the lack with sheer numbers and the relentlessness with which they stalk their prey.

### The Deadlands

Much like the Borderlands, the lands of the dead were once inhabited by children of the goddess Dawn. Sometimes surprisingly far away from humanity's frontier, some were wiped out suddenly, as the cemeteries and barrows swarmed with corpses leaving their graves and either going after the living or simply beginning their march north, were they would rejoin the Mists.

The Deadlands, as these territories came to be known soon afterwards, are desolate and dark places that offer little respite to those who enter them, even after the undead had been driven away or destroyed. And although sometimes even in those places a glimmer of hope can be found, those who venture into the lands of the dead should always remember that they are on a truly hostile ground.

### Denizens of the Deadlands

All those who met the undead know that the backbone of their hordes comprises of skeletal warriors and zombies – slow walking corpses, easy to run away from, but not as easy to put down. But believing that all the undead are exactly that: methodical but slow and shambling, could be a mistake leading a careless adventurer to eventually joining their ranks.

As the Mists seem to be able to raise any man and any creature from the dead, their reanimated servants range in scope and abilities. Those who would face this scourge on a regular basis know very well, that skeletal hands can handle a bow and that the slow approach of the rotting walkers is often preceded by a vicious attack of a pack of vampiric hounds.

As creatures of the Mists, some undead are able to wield magic, and whoever glanced at least once into the eye sockets of a skeletal mage knows, that an inhuman, malicious intelligence is also a gift the Mists would bestow upon its once dead servants.

## The Shieldbearers

For over three hundred years the Frostvalley Keep has stood as an unbreakable wall against the waves of beastmen and undead creatures trying to invade the southeastern regions of the Valskyrr. Among its many defenders, the Misthunters and Shieldbearers have been known to not only stand on the walls in perpetual vigil, but also help those in need, often lost far in the Mist-ridden lands.

Descended straight from the resilient warriors of old, the Shieldbearers serve both as dauntless sentinels of Frostvalley Keep, and as the protectors of all who ever pass through the stronghold's gate. Their martial prowess and toughness made them almost legendary, with the Shieldbearers' unflinching courage in the face of any foe reminding the inhabitants of the Valskyrr that the white bear crest on a thick shield always brings hope to those pursued by the Mists.



### Fengray son of Orm

Fengray was born in the shadow of Frostvalley Keep, a first-born son to a weaponsmith father and a Shieldbearer mother. From the day he first laid his eyes on a Shieldbearer's gear, he knew that one day he would carry the Bearshield to protect those in need – his sisters and brothers, his companions and the common folk trying to make a living in their cold and unforgiving homeland. Now, well over three decades later, he is among the most renowned of Frostvalley's sentinels.

Like many Shieldbearers, Fengray has been schooled in the craft of martial combat and taught to always lend his strength to those weaker than him. Ever ready to face the enemy, fiercely loyal to his friends and companions, Fengray has prevailed through many battles and skirmishes. Always prepared to venture forth with his companions, he has proven his value both as a Shieldbearer, and as a friend to all those who accompany him.

## The Arcane Mage

Traditionally, the people of the Valskyrr either shun magic, or conform to the types of the arcane craft that are most traditional in their homeland: either those of fire (associated with the warmth of the longhouses and the power of a well-lit forge) or of ice (associated mainly with the enemy, but not unknown among the Valskyrrians, especially those who walk the path of Dusk). True Arcane Mages of the Loreforge in Dathnagar are rarely seen in the cold north.

The power of Arcane Mages is not unknown in the Valskyrr, although most of them used to combat the armies of the Mists in different parts of the Northern Kingdoms. Some even claim that close proximity to the Mists themselves is able to subtly influence some of the magic users, slowly corrupting their minds and turning them into unwitting servants of the power they wish to stand against. This is probably why only the most disciplined and headstrong remain for extended periods of time in regions most exposed to the power of the Mists.





### Celentia of Dathnafar

Born and raised in the home city to the elite mage school known as the Loreforge, Celentia is a young Arcane Mage more than eager to prove herself by helping in the struggle against the Mists wherever she can. Still remembering the day when her brother was taken by a raiding band of slavers, her resolve remains unwavering and her mind sharpened to serve one purpose: find him and help those, who suffered from a similar calamity. And as she is not a healer, she uses her skills to strike at the enemies and protect those she considers friends and allies.

Celentia arrived in Frostvalley Keep relatively recently, but she has already proven her skill

and knowledge, aiding the efforts of the defenders and accompanying Misthunters and Shieldbearers on numerous missions. She also quickly became close friends with a young female cleric by the name of Arani, who she shares not only the pain of a past loss, but also the inner strength to prevent such tragedies from happening in the future. Although seemingly more physically brittle than the Valskyrrians, she has proven time and time again, that her enemies should fear the tremendous power she can unleash in battle.

### The Dawnbreaker Cleric

The Dawnbreakers are a warrior cult of the Dawnmother, always ready to face off against the malevolent servants of the Mists, and more than eager to counter its corrupting influence. More warrior-like than the less militant orders, the warrior clerics of Dawn struggle to appear everywhere the tendrils of the Mists managed to reach.

Although not an entirely uncommon sight in the Valskyrr, one cannot say that there are many Dawnbreakers in the cold north. The reason is simple: the order has suffered many casualties during the long years of struggle, and although it works tirelessly to replenish its ranks, the warrior clerics are by far not numerous. All around the Northern Kingdoms it is more and more difficult to see them in battle. And what a site they are – dealing crippling blows to the undead and bringing their companions back from the edge of death, they are always welcomed by any people who struggle against the darkness or the corrupting influence of the Mists.



### Arani of Svelkar

Arani was brought up in an orphanage under the auspices of the Sisters of Dawn, a female order of scholars and healers, devoted to bringing relief to the suffering. Like many orphaned children, after witnessing her home town burned to the ground by a band of Mist-crazed beastmen, she was brought further south and initiated into the order to be taught the arts of healing and restoration.

Her life path was once again altered drastically, when the

small temple she had been assigned to was attacked by a stray raiding party of Borderlander marauders, who managed to bypass the defences the Frostvalley Keep. While trying to hide from a pursuit party of Misthunters and Shieldbearers, the warband decided to take the temple by storm, hold some of the priestesses hostage and make the rest help them elude their pursuers. But the plan failed: the strong Valskyrrian blood took over, and Arani managed to call the Light of Dawn upon her enemies in a key moment, staggering the Borderlanders and alerting the Frostvalley party of their presence.

Her courage and skill did not go unnoticed and she was offered a new life in a Dawnbreaker cloister, later to return after a full initiation to her homeland to stay as a permanent resident of Frostvalley Keep. There she learned the punishing aspect of Light's power and trained with both the clerics and some of the fighters of the keep – including Fengray, who she first met when the Frostvalley pursuit party came to her and her sisters' aid. Shortly after her arrival she also met Celentia – a young mage, who Arani now perceives as both a formidable companion, and a good friend.

### The Seeker

Seekers are rarely found in the Valskyrr for one very simple reason: a Seeker is a nice name for a thief, a cutpurse or a scoundrel – an individual who usually excels at shady activities that are best exercised in crowded cities or dark alleys. And what should come as no surprise is that not only are those skills less useful out of their native environment, but the simple-minded folk of the Valskyrr might show little appreciation for them.

To say that Seekers are welcomed in Frostvalley Keep with cold distrust is a vast understatement. The shifty-eyed ex-dwellers of southern cities are openly shunned by the people of the Valskyrr. However, those who prove their qualities as warriors and companions, often lending their wits to those, who are more at home with a straight blade in hand, become no less valued and respected than warrior clerics or even the Shieldbearers themselves.



### Crow the Seeker

When asked directly, Crow (whose real name most certainly is a completely different one) tells the story of how he was raised on the streets of Northgarden, a distant port city. Reputedly it is there that he learned how to go by without an honest job to carry him through life, living among sailors, thieves and other shady characters inhabiting parts of the port district. But a short time in his company suggests that it might be a convenient misdirection, devised to keep his true identity a secret.

Extremely resourceful and street smart, the general knowledge Crow seems to possess suggests that he must have been properly schooled, as noted more than once by Celentia. Also, his proficiency with the dagger betrays proper training, although well covered by all the dirty tricks and nasty moves learned in the company of those knife fighters, who wield blades in bar fights and dark alleys.

After coming a few years ago to Frostvalley Keep, Crow has proven to be a valuable asset in the struggle against the Mists. Able to use his specific skill set with incredible creativity and effectiveness in the new



environment, he carved his place among those considered defenders and heroes of the stronghold. Headstrong, dauntless, able to find a way out of the most dire of situations, he is not only trusted by his companions – he also has their gratitude for finding a way out of more than a few seemingly hopeless perils.

## Arcaneweave Archers

Half-warriors and half-wizards, the Arcaneweave Archers have always been considered elite units in any battle force facing the minions of the Mists. Highly trained in the use of longbow, and able to move quickly to find themselves in the right position to strike at the key targets, these men and women made themselves known throughout the Northern Kingdoms as fierce and deadly enemies of the Mists.

The deadly accuracy of the Arcaneweave Archers is reinforced by their command of the Arcane that allows them to imbue their arrows with magical energies. Many dangerous foes were struck down by an arrow crackling with lightning or turning into a deadly fire bolt mid flight, and both the skill and dedication of these elite fighters has earned them the respect of the Valskyrrians, as well as a fierce hatred of the minions of the Mists.



### Ardenai, son of Arcai

Ardenai was born and raised in the southmost regions of the Valskyrr, hunting with his father in the lush forests and learning to make proper use of a hunting bow. But when one day an arrow he let loose burned with arcane fire before hitting its mark, it became clear that he was destined to be more than a simple hunter.

After honing his skills in Dathnafar and proving his mettle in battle, Ardenai finally decided to stay where his talents might be needed the most. That is when he came to Frostvalley Keep, where he first became known after single-handedly hunting down and eliminating a band of brigands applying a hit and run tactic to rob

travellers on their way to the stronghold. Since then he had many chances to prove himself as a companion, and he is held in high esteem by both the overseer of the keep, and all those who would have Ardenai accompany them on their quests.

## Warriors of Ravencrag

Far to the north even by Valskyrrian standards rises a spire of jagged rock known as the Ravencrag. In its long shadow eight tribes of barbarians survive the short, wet summers and harsh, unforgiving winters of the Valskyrr. These tribes are known for their fierceness in battle, as the tribes headstrong leaders gather yearly to select a jarl that will lead them against the beastmen in search of battle glory and a way to counter the corrupting influence of the nefarious Mists.

The Loremasters of Frostvalley keep have recorded many victories of the Ravencrag people, but they have also noticed an interesting feature: an exceptionally high number of the male inhabitants of that region display a rare talent for a very specific type of magic. The ease at which they learn to channel arcane energies to control the frost and cold of the Valskyrr makes many of them become the fearsome Frost Mages. The phenomenon also

influences the composition of the tribes' fighting force, as most of the axe wielding Furies are women – and some of the less educated in the ways of the Valskyrr even believe that the Ravencrag Furies are some sort of a barbaric female order.

Every year the Lord Commander of Frostvalley Keep pays the Ravencrag tribes an official visit to meet the new Jarl, traditionally leaving a small unit of Shieldbearers to aid in the upcoming battle against the beastmen, and taking a few of the young warriors who would help in defending the Keep and its people. Traditionally, the Shieldbearers engaged in this gesture return home wearing the white fur cloaks of the Ravencrag, while the Furies come back carrying axes forged in the hot furnaces of Frostvalley, made of the famous Valskyrrian steel.



### Venda the Fell Handed

Venda was born to one of the eight chieftains, a fierce Ravencrag Fury herself, so she had felt the need to prove her worth and martial prowess almost since she could walk and talk. At the age of 13 she climbed the jagged rocks of Ravencrag to face one of the hideous fellstalkers nesting there, and she not only managed to bring the creature's carcass down, but also carried three untouched eggs, thus proving her exceptional skill and resilience.

A year later she also proved herself in battle for the first time, which earned her a place among the Jarl's Blood Guard during each of the raids against the beastmen. She quickly became a warrior so skilled and fierce, that her fame would reach far, earning her admiration among Valskyrrian allies and a burning hatred of her foes.

One of those foes, a Ghoren chieftain known as Ghardhel the Bloody made an oath to face her in battle, and bring her head to his brother and the tribe's shaman **Ghardbak**, who would then sacrifice her essence to the Mists. But Ghardel made a grave mistake: as he faced Venda on the field of battle, he managed to land only one blow, after which the Fury cut him down with a mighty sweep of her war blades. And as she raised the horned head of the dead chieftain, blood running down her face, his warriors' spirits broke and they fled the field of battle, making the young Fury one of the Heroes Valskyrr will remember until the end of time.

## The Frost Mages

The Frost Mages are a product of an age old alliance between the eight tribes of Ravencrag and Frostvalley Keep. Before the alliance was forged, the tribes would occasionally send small war parties to raid on the territories under the protection of Skard Windbane, the Lord Commander of the Shieldbearers. These groups would often be supported by shamans wielding the power to command ice and snow, using the magic of cold as a weapon against their enemies.

Windbane had fought the Ravencrag Furies and the wielders of the frost magic on multiple occasions, knowing full well that the Ravencrag people mostly worshipped the Nightfather, but also being certain of them being enemies of the Mists. So when a Shieldbearer patrol came back to the keep bearing news of a Ravencrag raid against the beastmen ending in



a slaughter, and a beastman horde preparing to deal a final blow to the eight tribes, he decided to act immediately. Leading his Shieldbearers he came to the aid of Ravencrag, turning an almost certain defeat into a costly victory, but creating grounds to forge a lasting alliance.

The Lord Commander's bet paid off, as the eight tribes' new Jarl formed a blood pact with Skard Windbane, forging an alliance that would last for over a century, serving both the people of Ravencrag and Frostvalley Keep.

However, Windbane had one condition. Advised by his Loremasters he made it clear that the alliance would go on only as long as the boys exhibiting the talent to wield the power of the frost were properly schooled in the art of arcane magic, as uncontrolled use proved to twist their minds and open them to the corrupting influence of the Mists. The Jarl agreed somewhat begrudgingly, but agreed nonetheless, as those who survived the failed Ravencrag raid had already told him that the defeat was brought on not only by the numbers and the ferocity of the beastmen foes, but also by a sudden corruption and madness many of the shamans would fall victim to shortly after the Furies engaged the enemy.



### Hareag the Frost Mage

Like all boys that during their early teens reveal themselves to be the wielders of the frost magic talent, Hareag accompanied the Lord Commander of Frostvalley Keep on his way back home after his customary visit to meet the the new jarl of the eight tribes. After six months of being schooled by the Frostvalley Loremaster, he was shipped to Dathnagar to become a Frost Mage, his apprenticeship ending with the customary oath to oppose the Mists no matter which path (Dawn or Dusk) he chooses.

After returning to the Valskyrr, Hareag wandered the cold wastes and the Deadlands for years, aiding Ravencrag Furies in their pursuits,

and earning the respect that would make him an advisor to each of the jarls for the last sixteen years. He only recently resigned from the position and moved to Frostvalley Keep, the true reasons of this known only to a handful of those old enough to know his family's history, or perceptive enough to see through Hareag's motives. Regardless of any reasons Hareag might have had to relocate to Frostvalley Keep, he has quickly become a trusted ally and a well respected part of the questing company, as, despite his age, he decided not to continue advisory work, and instead become once again an active part of the struggle against the Mists.

## The Villains of Mistfall

### Master of the Wildlands

After the Duskfather deprived the beastmen of his might, the wild tribes came very close to self annihilation. Desperately looking for a way to regain their lost power, they would perform blood rituals, trials by combat and sacrificial cullings of their own numbers, hoping to regain the favour they had lost. All this to no avail, as the Duskfather remained adamant in his judgement and deaf to their savage calls. But the Mists did not.

Answering the call of the frenzied creatures, the Mists reached out and empowered the former servants of a scornful god, and filled them with might and ferocity not seen before Dusk decided to abandon his children.

And the first of the beastmen to receive this new gift were the tribal shamans – the few that were left after the cullings brought their numbers down to only a handful.

With new might, the beastmen sorcerers rose to great power again, and it became a custom of the tribes to home at least one of them – and usually as many as possible. The gift of wielding the dark and savage power was not a too common one, and with the passing years the shamans became as highly – if not higher – regarded as the hunters and warriors of the savage tribes.



### Ghardak the Charred

Sired by a warchief felled by his oldest son, **Ghardak** had lived in his brother's shadow for years, before rising to great prominence. And although he was surrounded by fearful respect from both the fighters and the magic users of his tribe, **Ghardak** remained unsatisfied with being the first in command among only the shamans of the herd.

Having a mind the lords of Blackwood would not be ashamed of, **Ghardak** kept his thirst for even more power secret until a perfect opportunity. Having been brought a vision of his brother's demise at the hands of a young Ravencrag Fury, instead of warning him, he told him a tale of glory and destiny

that would await the chief, if he crossed blades with the barbaric warrior. And so, with his younger brother's assurances, chief Ghardhel went to his death.

Short after the crippling defeat that left his tribe leaderless (and being sure that some of the most able warriors had fallen at Ghardhel's side), **Ghardak** immediately seized position of the chief, and to prove that a shaman may be as ferocious and able to lead the beastmen into battle as any hunter or warrior, he started gathering forces to launch a devastating attack on the lands under Forstvalley's protection.

### The Brigand Chief

Nobody really knows where or when Maelgar was born, but most believe he spent his early years in the northern part of the Valskyrr, in a village long since wiped out by beastmen or brigands. Most probably sold into slavery as a child, he was one of the few youngsters who manage to survive long enough to win their freedom by spilling blood or proving too useful to a Blackwood lord or a crafty Ghoren warchief.

Maelgar most certainly did not belong to the latter category, as when he finally let himself be known to the Shieldbearers of Frostvalley Keep, it was not due to his intellect, but because of his cruelty, and brutality rivalling those of the fierce beastmen blood hunters. And although some of the expeditions meant to bring Maelgar to justice were overseen by the Lord Commander himself, the brigand chief managed to fight his way out of every trap and finally either evade, or – more often – slay his pursuers.

The string of Maelgar's victories made him a prominent figure with the Blackwood brigand lords, so prominent in fact, that more than one of them started scheming against him. However, it was none of them, but a young Frostvalley Loremaster by the name of Rahlfors, that finally managed to take him down. Leading a group of Shieldbearers, he found one of Maelgar's treasure hoards, and knowing that the brigand chief



would visit them only alone, he set a trap that finally ended Maelgar's scourge.



### The Abomination

The victory was short lived. A little over a year later reports came in of an abominable beast wreaking havoc on a territory Maelgar had used to consider his own before his demise. Shortly after it turned out that it was Maelgar himself, brought back from the dead by the Mists and transformed into an abomination that seemed to have focused all his cruelty, his malice, and his insatiable hunger for blood.

Having murdered all his past subordinates and demonstrated a rage capable of destruction that would impress even the most Mist-crazed of the Ghoren warriors, Maelgar went on a further killing spree throughout the lands under the

protection of Frostvalley Keep. Now, surrounded by a herd of undead – some of them his own companions he'd killed, others merely his victims – he prepares to strike a mighty blow against Frostvalley Keep.

From a handful of notes left by Rahlfors after his sudden departure, it seems that the former chief's treasure hoards might contain powerful artefacts or at least answers that may help whoever faces Maelgar in defeating him once and for all. However, an ominous side note also mentions a strange ritual that may have not only been responsible for bringing Maelgar back, but might also imbue him with even more strength should he be opposed in battle.

### Rahlfors Wyngmere

Rahlfors was born as a second son to Berenas Wyngmere, a moderately wealthy but also extremely ambitious merchant operating southwest of Frostvalley Keep. In order to elevate the position of house Wyngmere, Rahlfors' father sent him to the Shieldbearers' headquarters to become an apprentice of Hyrkenan the Sage, one of the most esteemed Loremasters in the Northern Kingdoms, and a personal advisor to the Keep's Lord Commander.

After a few years of privileged life of a teenage son to a wealthy father, Rahlfors found himself in a new and slightly less comfortable situation. But he wasn't anything if adaptable, and although he lacked the discipline usually associated with the scholarly and rigid Loremasters, he quickly impressed his new master and teacher with his perceptiveness, the keenness of his senses, and his bright and inquisitive mind.

He also made friends among the Shieldbearers, as he started making use of his new healing skills the moment he mastered them – not only being always ready to help those who would come back wounded from their patrols, but also expressing his eagerness to join them on their missions. Hyrkenan, not without initial trepidations, finally gave in, allowing his young student to become a part of a few expeditions into the borderlands, where Rahlfors' skills seemed especially useful. The Shieldbearers, prone to fall to poisonous blades and magical ailments, quickly found out what a tremendous asset young Rahlfors really was.

Hyrkenan's apprentice thus became invaluable, and those of the Shieldbearers he had saved from death or grievous harm would become his friends, openly asking him to join them on their next patrol. With his

master's approval, Rahlfors would join them more and more often, in time becoming their guide, as the ways he would be able to find usually allowed them to avoid ambushes, and often turn the tables on the enemies of Frostvalley Keep.

Nobody questioned Rahlfors' skills and unique talents, knowing that in these dark times any blessings of the Dawnmother should be accepted without any doubts. The young sage was now more than just a companion or a lucky charm – he would initiate some of the patrols, claiming to have found new evidence during the previous excursions, he would investigate ruins or strange constructs the Shieldbearers would usually encounter when led by him, and he would lead them to yet another crushing victory over a band of brigands, a coven of sorcerers, or a herd of the undead.



### Rahlfors the Waychanger

Even Hyrkenan and the Lord Commander finally acknowledged his talent, Hyrkenan granting him the official title of a Loremaster, and the Lord Commander allowing Rahlfors to officially plan some of the patrol routes. Impressed with his uncanny ability to decipher enemy movements from the smallest clues, the Shieldbearers started following his orders without question, until Rahlfors was finally included in the yearly expedition to Ravencrag, where he would travel as a member of Lord Commander's personal guard.

After arriving at Ravencrag, Rahlfors finally revealed his true nature. Nobody knows when the

Mists managed to reach him, but only moments after the new Ravencrag Jarl was chosen, Rahlfors called upon the power of the Mists. Flocks of Fellhunters suddenly fell from the sky to attack the Furies and the Shieldbearers, and Rahlfors himself made his way to the new Jarl, suddenly changing before the man's very eyes. His hand, transformed into a vicious claw, struck at two unsuspecting Shieldbearers, the corrupting touch making their armours blacken and crumple like parchment set on fire. Leathery wings, suddenly emerging from the Loremaster's back took him into the air for but a blink of an eye, but long enough to make the strike against the Jarl a deadly one, and leaving Ravencrag without a leader for the first time in centuries.

Through shrieks of Fellstalkers and the roar of the Mists, Rahlfors laughed with shivering cruelty and took to the sky, this time planning to destroy the Lord Commander of Frostvalley Keep. Yet, moments before Rahlfors swooped down upon his prey, a wall of ice appeared between him and the Lord Commander, giving the warriors of Frostvalley and Ravencrag an opportunity to finally regroup. Taking a last look at the dead Jarl, the former Loremaster decided to fall back into the Mists – hesitating for only the moment needed to remember the face of the Frost Mage that stood in his way.

### The Flamecaster Mage

Sigraed was one of the youngest students admitted to the Dathnafar Loreforge, after she was freed from a group of slavers that had burned her village and killed her family. A Flamecaster Mage that accompanying the group of Misthunters that saved her, immediately felt her great potential, and even escorted her personally to Dathnafar in order to make sure that Sigraed would be well cared for, as her talent had already started to manifest in dangerous ways.



Because of her young age and exceptional abilities, Sigraed was immediately taken under the wing of Thaela, the Headmistress of the Flamecasters, who would from now on oversee the girl's education personally, as she had also recognized the power of the fire burning within young Sigraed. However, what was meant as means of protecting the young apprentice, turned out to be the same thing that put her in harm's way. Arkin Steadholme, head of one of the most powerful great houses of Dathnafar, took Thaela's decision as a personal insult, since the Headmistress had refused his firstborn son, also a student of the Loreforge, the privilege of becoming her personal Apprentice.

Thaela made little of the powerful nobleman's threats and, as Arkin's initial outrage seemed to die down after a few months, proceeded to train young Sigraed. The girl's talent and discipline was constantly impressing her, and Sigraed eagerness to help her fellow students made the girl many friends in the ranks of Apprentice Flamecasters. All seemed well until the time of Sigraed's final test, which turned out to be the moment Arkin Steadholme had waited for patiently.

### Sigraed, Lady of Mistflame

The mighty nobleman used his influence to bribe or threaten two of the masters that took part in the test, making it not only impossible, but also mortally dangerous for Sigraed. And only during the rite Thaela found out that something was wrong, but her intervention quickly turned into a tragedy, as the Headmistress herself fell victim to the trap, the unleashed and uncontrolled raw magic energy tearing her apart before her young Apprentice's eyes.

Some of the guilty were found, part of the truth came into the light, but it was already too late for Sigraed. Traumatized and seemingly broken, she slipped out of Dathnafar, knowing that Arkin Steadholme, the true perpetrator and murderer of the person Sigraed had been closest with, managed to evade punishment.



### The Mistflame

Sigraed's initial intention was to travel north to fight the beastmen and brigands on her own, resolving to destroy at least the enemies she would be able to reach, and eventually fall in battle, consumed by her own magic power. But she was met with something she did not expect.

After destroying a band of beastmen she was suddenly touched by a power unlike any she had experienced before. Filled with the same rage and fire, an overwhelming sense of being unjustly punished and discarded, the strange entity seemed to understand Sigraed more than any human being ever did. And as the young Flamecaster opened her

mind to the presence, she was overtaken by a need to cleanse the world with smouldering flames, and turn it into ash that would become one with her new source of power.

Empowered by the Mists, Sigraed first ravaged the lands on her own, but then returned to Dathnafar to take vengeance on Arkin Steadholme. Within one night she burned his house, his family and himself to ashes, and proceeded to find and kill his Flamecaster son. On her way she faced many of her former brothers and sisters, some of whom would oppose her and die, and others – who would join her, seeing the power she now wielded. And only after being countered by the might of the Loreforge's High Council, Sigraed yielded and fled back to the north, leading a renegade force of Flamecasters, and vowing to one day find and burn the last living member of the Steadholme house – Arkin's younger son, who managed to elude her vengeance.

## CREDITS

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A game published by:	NSKN Games & Passport Game Studios

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**Mistfall** was financed through Kickstarter with the support of LudiBooster. We would like to offer our special thanks to the amazing Kickstarter community gathered around **Mistfall** and express our gratitude to our backers for their trust and support.

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